

EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE IN AWARDING THE PRESIDENTIAL MEDAL OF FREEDOM

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 217, S. Res. 23.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 23) expressing the sense of the Senate that the President should award the Presidential Medal of Freedom posthumously to Dr. Benjamin Elijah Mays in honor of his distinguished career as an educator, civil and human rights leader, and public theologian.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the resolution and preamble be agreed to en bloc, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and any statements relating thereto be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 23) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 23

Whereas Dr. Benjamin Elijah Mays, throughout his distinguished career of more than half a century as an educator, civil and human rights leader, and public theologian, has inspired people of all races throughout the world by his persistent commitment to excellence;

Whereas Benjamin Mays persevered, despite the frustrations inherent in segregation, to begin an illustrious career in education;

Whereas as dean of the School of Religion of Howard University and later as President of Morehouse College in Atlanta, Georgia, for 27 years, Benjamin Mays overcame seemingly insurmountable obstacles to offer quality education to all Americans, especially African Americans;

Whereas at the commencement of World War II, when most colleges suffered from a lack of available students and the demise of Morehouse College appeared imminent, Benjamin Mays prevented the college from permanently closing its doors by vigorously recruiting potential students and thereby aiding in the development of future generations of African American leaders;

Whereas Benjamin Mays was instrumental in the elimination of segregated public facilities in Atlanta, Georgia, and promoted the cause of nonviolence through peaceful student protests during a time in this Nation that was often marred by racial violence;

Whereas Benjamin Mays received numerous accolades throughout his career, including 56 honorary degrees from universities across the United States and abroad and the naming of 7 schools and academic buildings and a street in his honor; and

Whereas the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest civilian honor in the Nation, was established in 1945 to appropriately recognize Americans who have made an especially meritorious contribution to the security or national interests of the United States, world peace, or cultural or other sig-

nificant public or private endeavors: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the Senate that the President should award the Presidential Medal of Freedom posthumously to Dr. Benjamin Elijah Mays in honor of his distinguished career as an educator, civil and human rights leader, and public theologian and his many contributions to the improvement of American society and the world.

ACTION VITIATED—H. CON. RES. 272

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the action previously taken by the Senate regarding H. Con. Res. 272 be vitiated.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PATRIOT DAY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Judiciary Committee be discharged from further consideration of H.J. Res. 71 and the Senate then proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The clerk will report the joint resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A joint resolution (H.J. Res. 71) amending title 36, United States Code, designating September 11 as Patriot Day.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the joint resolution.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I rise today to urge adoption of H.J. Res. 71, which designates September 11 as "Patriot Day." This resolution also calls on all Americans to observe a moment of silence to remember all those who lost their lives in the terrorist attack of September 11, 2001. I am the Senate sponsor of this bill along with Senators SCHUMER and SPECTER.

The events of September 11 have forever changed the lives of all Americans. We have all experienced a renewed sense of community and a sense of patriotic vigor that are the best of America. So many lives were touched by the terrorist attack—not only the thousands of heroes who lost their lives but also those they left behind. I am certain that few Americans will remain untouched by the devastation of our citizens that we saw in downtown New York, in the Pennsylvania countryside, and at our Pentagon.

These terrorists killed innocent Americans from every part of the country. We were so saddened to learn that Mary Alice Wahlstrom and her daughter, Carolyn Beug, of Kaysville, Utah, were struck down by this senseless violence. Mary Alice's husband of 52 years, Norman, described Mary Alice as the "happiest lady you'll meet." As one of the "kids," she joined with her only daughter to help her twin 18-year old granddaughters settle in at art school on the East Coast. In this time of grief,

we join Norman, her four sons, and 18 grandchildren in hoping that our love and faith will continue to sustain each of us during this tragedy.

The grief all Americans feel today is barely speakable. I, for one, cannot express in words the sorrow I feel for the thousands of families profoundly shattered by the acts of war perpetrated against us on September 11th. I commend my colleagues who have spoken so eloquently at such a great moment of national tragedy.

As many of my colleagues have noted, our grief is leavened by the countless stories of sacrifice and heroism. Heroes such as the policemen, firemen and emergency personnel who rushed to the buildings and entered them in a race against collapse, a race that they unfortunately lost. I hope that every American who sees a fireman or a policeman today thinks of the sacrifices that these everyday individuals are prepared to make for the good of our society, for the good of ourselves, every day.

There is no calamity America will withstand that will not be met with and overwhelmed by the decency, courage and selflessness of Americans coming to the aid of their own. It will be years before we can collect all of these stories and it will be impossible to measure the courage and bravery of these countless everyday heroes. As John says in the Bible, "Greater love hath no man than this; that a man lay down his life for his friends."

I also commend my colleagues for their unanimous support for the Administration of President George W. Bush. Americans are not partisan when we are to face a common foe, nor are their representatives.

We will face this foe together, and together we will prevail.

We must never forget the attack on America and the mighty resolve of the American spirit that has never shown brighter than after September 11. This resolution before us today will ensure that we will never forget the events of September 11, 2001.

I commend my colleagues in the House for adopting this resolution and urge my Senate colleagues to adopt this important measure tonight. Elaine and I offer our prayers for the victims and their families, as well as the thousands of brave rescue workers, including Utah's Urban Search and Rescue team. The team consists of fire department personnel from Salt Lake City and County. Our prayers go to the member of our armed forces, the greatest defenders of freedom a nation has ever known. And our prayers go to President Bush and his Administration, who are dedicated to peace and must now respond to war.

May God Bless America.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution and preamble be agreed to and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table.